

August 2002



King County

Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and
Dependency Services Division

The Good Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

Introduction from the editor:

This newsletter is an effort by the King County Regional Support Network and the Quality Review Team of King County to document the thoughts of consumers, youth and supporting staff. The Good Newsletter is looking for articles from consumers, youth and staff from within King County. If you have a personal story to tell, helpful information you would like to share or creative expression such as poetry, pictures or art, please mail them to:

Steven Collins
Department of Community &
Human Services
Exchange Building
821 Second Avenue, Suite 610
Seattle, WA 98104-1598

My e-mail address is:
Steven.collins@metrokc.gov

Letters, articles & information submitted may be edited for clarity and content.

Remember this is the good newsletter.

From the manager's desk:

Amnon Shoenfeld



The King County Regional Support Network (RSN) is very excited about the first publication of a bi-monthly newsletter for clients of the King County mental health system and other interested persons. The Quality Review Team, which is based at the RSN and staffed by mental health consumers, has interviewed clients throughout the County over the past six years. They have discussed the topics of after hour's crisis care, consumer-case manager relations and client satisfaction with services provided by agencies and the county. With information learned in part from these interviews and in part from other venues, we believe that clients have vital information to share about their experiences receiving mental health services in King County. The Quality Review Team staff would like to be able to share information directly with clients. This newsletter will be one forum for



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Mission Statement:

The knowledge and wisdom that comes from personal experience as a consumer of the mental health system should be shared with all who have an eye and an ear to absorb what is written.

The pen is the excellent communicator. Our commitment is to make the consumer voice heard and acknowledged in King County.

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What's work got to do with it?

By: Mike Donagan

Fifty years ago, mental health treatment was focused on work. Many state mental hospitals had patients working in the fields around the institution as well as in other industries. Although this provided work activity for patients, it was often a less than scrupulous activity: many of our current federal labor laws are the result of the abuses that occurred.

With deinstitutionalization in the 1960's, many of the state hospital patients were discharged to their communities. Those too ill to live

on their own remained in the hospitals-- often pacing the hallways or sitting, staring in large empty day rooms. They had little to do as the fields around the hospitals were sold.

In the 1970s community mental health centers were created with day treatment their mainstay. Though the goal was rehabilitation, often the desired outcome was a compliant client rather than a return to mainstream America.

Programs were designed at community mental health centers to create meaningful structure in people's lives. These programs simulated what most Americans get from



their jobs: structured daily activity and a place to belong.

Consumers were generally advised against going to work, told that work stress would increase their symptoms and were warned they would lose their benefits.

In spite of these negative predictions, people did go to work. By the late 1980s, mental health centers began to respond to this trend and offer support services. Employment services evolved to include having employment services based in community mental health centers.

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On Thursday May 23rd, 2002 in Kirkland, Washington the

King County Mental Health Consumer Involvement Task Force held its first meeting. The purpose of the Task Force is to work toward implementation of the Ticket to Work Bill.

The Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999/Ticket to Work (TTW) bill was signed by Governor Locke in July 2001 and is scheduled for implementation on January 1st, 2003.

The intent of Ticket to Work is to eliminate work disincentives to So-

New century consumer Coalition launches task force:

By: Clifford Thurston

cial Security Disability recipients. This historical piece of legislation could eliminate constraints placed upon consumers by the current system.

In 2001, myself on behalf of New Century Consumer Coalition and retired Washington Advocates for the Mentally Ill Executive Director, Eleanor Owen, teamed up and testified to the Washington State Senate Health and Long-term Care Committee in support of Ticket to Work. We're now looking for more interested people to join the Task Force.

For more information contact:

Clifford Thurston Task Force/ Co-

ordinator, New Century Consumer Coalition

(206) 779-3212 (206) 789-7722

cliffordthurston@hotmail.com

*From the Manager's Desk
(Continued from page 1)*

that communication. It will also have general information and articles from a variety of contributors, including clients and client support groups, care managers and youth.

We hope all who read this newsletter enjoy it and are active participants in its evolution.

One Clients Story:

By Steven Collins



Every consumer has a story to tell. It's no fun being diagnosed and living with a mental illness. Our journey and our pain are unique among life's experiences. There are three things you can do to help you feel better and enjoy life although you take medication and receive therapy or counseling. They are "Good Nutrition", "Enough Rest" and "Enough Exercise". You will be surprised how much better you will feel and how much zest you will have for life.

When I was first diagnosed with schizophrenia back in 1975, I sat down on my couch and thought of all the healthy and positive living skills I had been taught in high school and one year of college. And there were quite a few. I realized I had gotten away from healthy living and I just did not feel very good. I might have been afflicted with a mental illness no matter what, but now is as good a time as any to get healthy is what I told myself.

One of my co-workers told me she has to keep a balanced and healthy lifestyle or she does not feel very good, and she does not have a mental illness. Healthy living is for everyone!!!!

Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables everyday, get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night and start a good regimen of exercise everyday or every other day. Walking or jogging has helped me the most.

Tell your case manager you would like to put together a plan for healthy living. I'm sure they would love to help you.



DSHS Increases their Customer services:

Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) Community Service Office is now available on line. You can apply for benefits or check the status of your application or your benefits online. The Internet address is onlinesco.dshs.wa.gov.

Dream catchers support group:

By John Corr

Dream Catchers is a client run, all client (consumer) support group. It has been meeting almost a year and a half every Wednesday from 4pm to 6pm at Valley Cities Counseling and Consultation, which takes no responsibility for what happens. Our name we chose because the dream catcher holds back bad dreams while we sleep and lets through the good dreams. We have check-in without any cross talk the first hour where each in turn speaks his/her mind or passes, then, after a break, more general discussion. We have a core group of about 5 to 6 and several

others who have come and gone over the course. We tend to have various members facilitate on a voluntary basis.

"Dream Catchers has been a source of hope. Community activism, and a voice toward wellness and care. It's been a joy experiencing its development."

We have edited a newsletter that has come out every once in a while for over a year. It's edited by one of our

members, Cindy. She brought up the idea of a newsletter, then a couple of weeks later she said she would produce it. Valley Cities dis-

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The first time you sign on you will have an opportunity to choose a password. Keep it safe and remember it. Computers are available at most public libraries and some clubhouses have online access. Also for people who are having a very difficult time following up with their application for financial, medical and food stamp benefits, your case manager or advocate may be able to represent you at the office.



AUGUST 2002						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

*What's work got to do with it
(Continued from page 2)*

Today, because of managed care cost the types of services provided is changing. Daily structured activities were an early casualty; employment services that are integrated into comprehensive mental health treatment may become another.

Recent funding cuts have negatively affected the service hours available. After medication management and basic case management, there is little left for anything else. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation can help, but a mental health center cannot staff and operate an employment program based solely on DVR funds.

Within the mental health community there is differing value placed on the role of vocational services. A National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) survey of agency directors, case managers, consumers and family members ranked the importance of 13 "essential services". They found that in terms of importance, family members ranked vocational services 2nd, consumers ranked them 8th, and case managers ranked them 11th.

Despite numerous system challenges, King County has embarked on a movement to reamp its mental health system. It has embraced the Recovery Model, which emphasizes the role of vocational services. A Vocational Task Force is looking into how the King County Regional Support Network is going to con-

tinue to provide employment services. If you feel this is an important service that you want available now or in the future it is important to make your desires known to case managers, to agency's directors and to County Administrators.

Mike Donagan is a Rehab Counselor II with Harborview Employment Service.

His phone number is (206) 731-3480

System news: Ticket to Work



On July 11, 2001, Governor Gary Locke signed legislation to help low and moderate income people with disabilities to return to work without fear of losing Medicaid benefits.

The Healthcare for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program recognizes the employment potential of people with disabilities, and represents Washington State's response to the landmark "Ticket to Work" and Work Incentives Improvement Act" (TWWIIA) of 1999

The TWWIIA enables people with disabilities to no longer have to choose between taking a job and having health care. More information about TWWIIA is available on line at

<http://www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/twwiia/>

Dietary tips for consumers:

By Steven Collins



Seattle Central Community College had a course on health in 1989.

The Instructor had not eaten any processed sugar in eight years. She spoke of how much better she felt and how balanced she was feeling. If you happen to eat too much sugar you will get an energy rush but hours later you will crash into depression, something consumers of the mental health system don't need.

You have to read your labels when you shop for groceries to avoid foods that have sugar in them. This includes honey and fructose and other sweeteners. To help control cravings increase your intake of protein. I feel 100% better cutting sugar out of my diet.



Cross Agency Systems Training (CAST)

Free training available in September

- Older Adults September 11
- Adults—September 18
- Children—September 25

Review of Services Available

For more information or registration, call (206) 291-1000

Article from youth:

Is This What Government is supposed to Look Like?

By Elijah Akins

My name is Elijah Akins and I am a 16 year-old junior at Ingraham High School. I am also a youth member of the group Health 'N' Action. Health 'N' Action is a youth advocacy group within King County.

I would like to talk to you for a minute about our county government. I have been working with this county project for the past year and for the last year it seems like I have learned more about political gain more than I have working in a youth-led and youth managed group. The influence of government towards our project is so great that I wonder if Health 'N' Action is really my group. I know every decision that I make to help better my group has to be approved by someone that is higher than me. So it really isn't youth-led but adults have to approve it.

The experience that I have had with this Youth group has been great. But, all these rules and regulations we have to follow, it feels like there are rules from how to come into the office to how to use the bathroom.

When I look at the hoops our group has to jump through I get curious. Is this what government is really supposed to look like?



I am the type of person that likes to question. I think that people who work for government systems forget to question. We need to realize that our responsibility as citizens is to question our government about the way they do business and the way we try to make public change. As public officials we try to do two things: 1) We try to make public policy that makes sense out of utter chaos, and 2) We try to make the wrongs in the past right.

We need to make society a better place for everyone. We can't spend time trying to change society for the better if we are always worrying about the policies or the rules that we may break. We can't worry about our political image at the expense of really helping someone. We need to fight the system from the inside. That is the only way there is going to be real change in policy.

We can create change if we question authority and partner with others.

Health 'N' Action is a youth group dedicated to youth voice in public policy. Health 'N' Action is funded by the Children & Families in Common grant @ the King County Mental Health Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division.



Mentoring/peer-to-peer support

By Lenore Meyer



With the recent budget cutbacks, providers at many of the agencies have had to increase caseload size. One of the concerns the Quality Review Team (QRT) repeatedly hears from clients is that they would like more time with their case managers. Since that is unlikely to happen, I would like to suggest that mentoring or peer-to-peer support be considered by the agencies.

Mentoring means sharing your experiences with others, sharing what you have learned that works for you. It means **listening** openly and honestly when someone is talking to you about an issue that is important to him or her. It also means confidentiality. It is very important that there is a strong trust relationship.

A good mentoring program can provide clients with someone to talk with when their case manager is not available. A client who has had stability in the program for a period of time gains lots of valuable information and

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*Dream catchers support group
(Continued from page 3)*

tributes it.

I'm going to end with some anonymous quotes gathered from members at our last meeting.

"I find the group very supportive and helpful. It helps to get something off my chest and to listen to others."

"I think Dream Catchers has been a very good savior for me as I was released from crisis care without any treatment. Dream Catchers has been my only support."

"I would not have gotten into therapy at all if it wasn't for Dream Catchers as the system had broken down and I had slipped through the cracks."

"Dream Catchers has been a source of hope. Community activism, and a voice toward wellness and care. It's been a joy experiencing its development."

Dream Catcher's support Group meets on Wednesdays from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. They meet at Valley Cities Counseling and Consultations new facility at:

2704 "I" Street NE
Room Number 3
Auburn, WA 98002.



Contact person:
John Corr: (253) 735-0916

*Mentoring/peer-to-peer support
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insight that he or she can pass on to peers. Sometimes all someone needs is for someone to listen to them. Since mentors deal directly with case managers, they can notify them if a problem occurs that they are unable to handle.

I have been a mentor. I focused on about four clients. I was open to meeting them at my mental health center and also gave them my home phone number. My role during almost all of my mentoring situations was listening, make suggestions when appropriate, offer encouragement, and giving feedback on how I solved similar problems. My mentoring also extended to group sessions. The mentors were trained by case managers on how to handle situations and how best to respond to a client's problem. It was a rewarding experience. I was able to help clients and they in turn, helped me.

During this time of cutbacks I feel that it is necessary to come up with new ways to help clients get the support they need. Mentoring and peer-to-peer is a proven way to go.

Lenore Meyer
Quality Review
Team Member

Move For Mental Health 2002



A 5K Run/Walk To Raise Awareness

WHAT: A 5k, 3.1 mile run/walk (USATF certified course, chip timing provided) - or - a one mile (untimed) stroll along the scenic shores of Lake Washington. A partnership between NAMI-WAMI Advocates for the Mentally Ill and Community Psychiatric Clinic.

WHEN: Saturday, September 28, 2002—9:00 am

WHERE: Sand Point Magnuson Park - Seattle, WA Waterfront Start/Finish

WHY? To raise public awareness and funds to benefit those affected by mental illness. Run or walk for yourself, or in honor of those who walk their own road to recovery everyday.

Start forming a TEAM now! Contact friends, family and co-workers for their PLEDGES of support! We can all make a difference - one step at a time!

Need more information, or want to get involved?

Please call the Move for Mental Health hotline at 206-545-2398 or e-mail MFMH2002@qwest.net

Mental illness touches everyone....



King County

Department of
Community and Human Services

Mental Health, Chemical Abuse
and Dependency Services Division

Exchange Building
821 Second Avenue, Suite 610
Seattle, WA 98104-1598

(206) 296-5213/(206) 296-7615

(206) 296-0583 Fax

(206) 205-0569 TTY/TDD

We're on the web!

[http://www.metrokc.gov/
dchs/mhd/](http://www.metrokc.gov/dchs/mhd/)

Announcement:

You are invited to a Recovery Symposium September 19, 2002, At the Mountaineers Building 300 3rd Avenue West, Seattle, Washington.

What is Recovery?

Recovery is a "deeply personal unique process of changing one's attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills, and/or roles...to live a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with limitations caused by the illness" (Anthony 1993)

For more information and/or a brochure, call Washington Advocates for the Mentally Ill (WAMI) at (206) 789-7722
802 NW 70th St., Seattle, WA 98117

*Look for the next issue of the Good Newsletter
and it's focus on employment
Due out in October.*

This material is available in alternate formats for persons with disabilities upon request. Please call (206) 296-7689 or TTY (206) 205-0569 for assistance.

